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TITLE OF MINOR DISSERTATION

THE CHALLENGES OF DECOLONISING UNIVERSITY CURRICULA IN SOUTH AFRICA: A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

by

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to my husband TB Tengen, the Tengens, the Fogas and the kehbilas for their support to see that is work is a success. To all of you, I say thank you!



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I also glorify God Almighty and I thank him for the strength, the knowledge and wisdom to write this dissertation.



ABSTRACT

This study presents a theoretical and critical analysis of the challenges of decolonising university curricula in South Africa. This research is based on the premise that university curricula has not considerably changed due to the incessant use of western epistemologies, diverse nature of the South African landscape, many languages, complexities among African scholars and the influences of neoliberal and globalisation policies and practices on higher education. Universities have been caught in the middle to bridge the gap and strike a balance such that university curricula constitute both western and African (South) knowledges and languages. This study follows the qualitative research design that aimed at exploring and discovering themes from data collected. It adopts an interpretivist research approach as it deals with the collection and analyses of extensive review of data from journals, articles and books so as to describe and interpret related works. It entails a hermeneutics analysis of data so as to understand the meaning derived from textual analysis. It adopts critical theory as its theoretical framework and uses decoloniality paradigm to explain concepts. Findings indicate that universities in South Africa still pride in the knowledges and languages of the western world as ideals. These knowledges are held as unquestionable truths that cannot be challenged. Hence, they continue to dominate and disregard South African philosophies. Amidst these challenges, university curricula could actually be decolonised if the powers that be and the department responsible for designing curricula include South African world views and languages as part of the curricula. However, this has not been the case as the decolonisation process is yet to be achieved.

KEYWORDS: Decolonisation, Decoloniality, University Curricula, Interpretivism

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Generally, most African countries after independence saw the need to revamp their social, political and economic spheres that were misrepresented during colonisation. There was the general outburst for the reawakening or recovery of their heritage. It was a cry to bring back their lost identity, culture, philosophy and language. It was a cry to recognise and make use of Africa's great potentials that have been relegated to the periphery. In South Africa, the dawn of a democratic era ushered in the need to revise university curricula from Eurocentric discourses and languages to incorporating South Africa's worldviews, languages and history, which however is yet to be achieved. The absence of an African epistemology, worldview, language and discourse in university curricula triggered a demand for decolonisation of curricula (Santos, 2014: 92). The call for decolonisation of university curricula in most institutions of higher learning in South Africa, sparked off wide spread campaigns and demonstrations especially during the #RhodesMustFall movement in 2015. Students called for a break away from Eurocentric principles and the incorporation of African history, philosophy, language, epistemology in university curriculum (Heleta, 2016). The South African university curricula, twenty five years after independence, still reflect Western hegemony and universities still offer curricula that is deeply rooted in colonial thinking (Heleta, 2016). The prevalence of these western theories and texts as models for students indicate challenges for South African curriculum designers, policy makers and stakeholders to do away with western knowledge systems despite the call to decolonise university curricula (Hamadi, 2014: 41). These Western views conveyed through colonial knowledge are intended to subjugate, overpower and exploit South Africans. As such, students are threatened by theories and texts that disprove their lived experiences and history as their lived experiences and languages are not reflected in university curricula (Heleta, 2016).

Besides, the 21st century university has witnessed tremendous protests from African scholars and other writers (Mbembe, 2016; Wa Thiong'o, 1981, 1993, Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; Fanon, 2015, Said, 2014) who have strongly opposed and condemned the continuous use of western epistemology at various universities and advocated that African knowledge and philosophy (discourse, thoughts and values) be at the centre of discussion in university classrooms.

However, the concept of decolonisation of curricula is not without challenges. These arise from the diverse nature of South African landscape that is plagued with social inequality, gender disparity, racism, nepotism, the negative impacts of neoliberalism and globalisation. Also, the existence of many languages serves as an impediment to curriculum change because not everyone understands all the languages spoken (Heleta, 2016). The complexities and lack of self-confidence on the part of African educational leaders is another cause for concern. Heleta asserts that several influential Africans and interested groups will do all it takes to contest, challenge, and weaken decolonisation so as to maintain their positions and preserve their interests. In addition, some African intellectuals think that Africa does not have intelligentsia or anything from which they could learn (Heleta, 2016). Hence, the call for decolonisation of university curricula remains challenging to the academia. This study therefore focuses on the challenges of decolonising university curricula in South Africa. It investigates why university curriculum has not considerably changed since students called for the incorporation of African knowledge system, worldviews, philosophy, and languages in the curriculum.

1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

South African universities operate under colonial dictates as most of what is taught at universities is influenced by these colonial masters. The South African landscape is plagued with societal ills like racism, social injustice, inequality; western epistemology and the impact of globalisation and neoliberalism that hinder the decolonisation process. Curriculum is designed for global competitiveness and universities are seen as profit making organisations. Hence, students are not trained or empowered to serve their communities but they study concepts that promote and maintain the hegemonies of their colonial masters. The prevalence of many languages, diverse cultures and lack of confidence of African intellectuals appear challenging to

the decolonisation process. This study seeks to evaluate the challenges of decolonising South African university curricula in a postcolonial era. It strives to unpack challenges towards efforts at decolonising university curricula.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.3.1 Main Question

What are the challenges of decolonising university curricula in South Africa?

1.3.2. Sub-Questions

1. Why is there a call for decolonisation of curricula in South African universities?
2. What evidence is there of university curricula reflecting western epistemologies after the call to decolonise it?
3. How can the problems of decolonisation of university curricula be resolved?

1.4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.4.1 Main Aim:

The purpose of this study is to examine the challenges of decolonising university curricula in South Africa.

1.4.2 Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the factors leading to the call for decolonisation of curricula
2. To analyse the challenges of decolonising the curricula in South Africa
3. To suggest ways of rectifying the problems confronting university curriculum change.

1.5. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

This study will contribute to the improvement in curriculum as it will influence policy makers, stakeholders and curriculum designers to design curriculum that upholds African (South) knowledge systems, philosophies, identities and cultures. They should take into consideration concepts and theories that emancipate students from dominant forms of oppression; which celebrate South Africa's culture and which acknowledge their concepts and worldviews. Further, this study will contribute to knowledge by raising factors which hinder decolonisation of university curriculum; that may help curriculum designer take precautionary measures when planning university curriculum. The debates and findings of this study will benefit students as it will develop in them critical minds and analytic skills to give a critique of the dominant use of western epistemology in the educational milieu. Still from the findings, this study will improve researchers', scholars' and students' abilities to give appraisals of the study so as to enhance the educational process. The outcome of this study is expected to generate great interest in the general public and the educational sector by providing factors that contribute to ways of decolonising university curriculum.

1.6 METHODOLOGY

1.6.1 Research Design

This study adopted the qualitative research design that aimed at exploring and discovering themes and meanings about the phenomena under study. According to Neuman (2000, 483) qualitative research method involves the intrinsic collection, organisation and explanation of written material drawn from different opinions for the purpose of giving meaning to social realities. Qualitative research approach aims at analysing language and text so as to come up with a proper understanding of the thematic concern from several points of view (Porcino & Verhoef, 2010). Qualitative research is exploratory; hence, the research explored various literature from several authors on decoloniality. Qualitative research makes use of the social background where issues of racism, different knowledges, languages, social injustice are

underlined as major issues responsible for the delay in the decolonisation process. This study is a critical analysis of data presented through the lens of decoloniality paradigm. It attempts to understand, interpret, and give meanings to phenomena in terms of how people define them. Hence, this study followed an interpretivist (phenomenological) approach. This approach was chosen for this study because the researcher collected and analysed extensive data from Journals, Articles and Books that were used to describe and interpret related works and to get different interpretations of decolonisation from several authors. There was the need to search for related data that address key issues patterning to the topic under study.

The interpretive paradigm is an investigative way of probing into or giving explanations to different human or societal challenges (Porcino & Verhoef, 2010). The interpretivists try to understand the world from a subjective perspective and their basic premise to access reality is built on creating awareness, language and shared meanings (Myers, 2009). They are also concerned about judging and evaluating theories as an iterative process between collecting and analysing data.

An interpretive approach to research deals with how meaning is derived from the actions of a group of persons, that is to say, it deals with how meaning is derived from the actions, circumstances and relationships of a set of people. It is intended to achieve a practical purpose (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988; Neuman, 2000).

The interpretivists Hudson & Ozanne (1988) and Neuman (2000) hold that, truth does not exist in isolation, people get meaning of concepts from their interaction with other people and from their personal experiences. In essence, these researchers are of the opinion that, in order to make meaning of a phenomenon, qualitative researchers must interact with the people so as to comprehend and interpret the meanings of human behaviour (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988; Neuman, 2000).

The research was conducted through a review of related works (articles, journals, books) on decolonisation by different writers in order to gain an insight on their diverse points raised. Main highlights were described for emphasis and to show how grave the issues were. Hence, the research method employed was document/content analysis and it was descriptive in nature. The descriptive narration of analysing data gave an understanding of phenomena and themes were

drawn from related works by observing the occurrences of words (Creswell, 2002). The result of this study was produced through the researcher's interpretation of other's views in an attempt to give meanings to thematic concerns.

1.7 LIMITATIONS

The main purpose of this research is to critically examine the challenges of decolonising university curricula in a postcolonial South African university. However, due to lack of time and resources, the study was limited to western epistemologies and languages as the core concerns that hinder the decolonisation process. As such, the study adopted a theoretical approach that was limited to review of related works only.

1.8 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 1: *The Introduction* presents an overview of the study as key components are highlighted. The aim of the study, the objectives, problem statement and importance of the study are introduced. The structure of the study, methods and findings are also provided.

Chapter 2: *Theoretical Framework* presents a critical analysis of the theory of decoloniality as a lens through which decolonisation will be scrutinised. Decoloniality is all about recognising South Africa's potentials, acknowledging their worldviews, knowledges and languages and inculcating these knowledges to students for empowerment. The opinions of key decoloniality scholars are appraised.

Chapter 3: *Conceptions of Decolonisation*: This chapter explores the concept of decolonisation by firstly looking at its origin, various definitions related to the topic and the processes of decolonisation.

Chapter 4 *The Nature of University Curricula:* This chapter unpacks the conceptions of curricula, that is, it analyses the nature and characteristics of university curricula prior to decolonisation era and it also looks at the agencies of decolonisation.

Chapter 5 *Why Decolonisation of the Curriculum in South African Universities.* This chapter examines the reasons for decolonising university curricula.

Chapter 6 *Challenges of the Decolonisation of the Curriculum;* focuses on the challenges of decolonisation, that is, it critically examines factors that impede decolonisation of university curricula.

Chapter 7 *Conclusion:* provides solutions to challenges identified, recommendation and suggestion of possible area of interest for further research.



CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the structure and synopsis of the study as major thematic concerns were highlighted. The aim of the study, the problem statement and the knowledge gap were elucidated. Chapter 2 is the theoretical framework that articulates an understanding of existing knowledge on the topic under study and which will also guide the various assumptions put forward by different scholars. This study adopts critical theory as its theoretical framework and uses decoloniality paradigm to explain concepts. Critical theory aims at critiquing and emancipating people from dominant forms of oppression (Horkheimer, 1993). It seeks to review and change the world and phenomena and not just merely to explain and interpret it. According to Horkheimer (1993) critical theory should be explicative, empirical, and normative, all at the same time. That is, it should explain current societal issues, look for the actors to change it, and provide both clear standards for criticism and attainable practical goals for social change (Bohman, 2005). This chapter therefore presents a critical analysis of the theory of decoloniality and expounds on its applicability in the current study. Thus, the challenges of decolonising university curricula will be scrutinised through the lens of decoloniality paradigm.

Decoloniality on its part is the continuous opposition to and movement away from Eurocentric discourses. (Quijano 2007: 168). It is a fight against the history of human civilisation stemming from the west and the association of the creation of knowledge with the western world (Quijano 2000: 542). Decoloniality questions the origin of supremacy coming from the west (Quijano 2007: 168). Mignolo (2011: 27) argues that decoloniality consists of the systematic and effective way of challenging and delinking the imperial 'matrix of power' power (social discrimination- be it national, ethnic and humanity). To this scholar, it is associated with decolonial practices and

thoughts that bespeaks of the direct opposition to social, political and cultural sovereignty enacted by the westerners. In essence, it is a radical socio- cultural and political practice against the inventors of imperial civilisation (Mignolo, 2011:27).

Decoloniality is a theory that advocates for the continuous rejection of Eurocentric claims and the imposition of western philosophies on Africans (coloniality of power, knowledge and being), at the same time, it is about recognising and acknowledging African values and actually impacting these values on students for self-aggrandisement. The decolonial paradigm out rightly denounces social injustice, racism, oppression, marginalisation and eurocentrism but call for an egalitarian educational environment suitable for all races (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013:10). These social ills affect students' psychosocial and psychological developments (cognitive, intellectual, social and emotional) as they will be psychologically unstable or unprepared for studies.

A number of scholars (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, Walter Mignolo, Edward Said, and Maldonado-Torres) have written extensively on the theory of decoloniality. This is to reawaken the need for South African academia to question the universality of knowledge and to reject the notion of the coloniality of being and power. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) argues that decoloniality is premised on three thoughts: 'coloniality of power', 'coloniality of knowledge' and 'coloniality of being'. This means that decoloniality speaks of the necessity of the extensive 'decolonial turn' that comprises the very need to decolonise power, being and knowledge that are being orchestrated and taught at universities. These concepts will be analysed below because they constitute elements that hinder decolonisation of curricula.

2.2 DECOLONIALITY AS THE COLONIAL MATRIX OF POWER

Coloniality of power examines why the present 'global political structure' was created that in turn established unequal power structure in the society. It explores profoundly into how the world was divided into 'Zone of Being' and 'Zone of Non-Being' sustained by imperceptible 'abyssal lines.' Coloniality of power ascribes civilisation, modernisation, and development to the west (zone of being) while imposing colonialism, slave trade and apartheid on (Africa) South

Africa (the Zone of Non-Being) (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013:11). Coloniality of power is manifested at universities in the form of discrimination where, South African discourses (indigenous and endogenous' knowledges, African values, languages and modes of learning that were practiced before colonisation) are underrated, minimised and ignored while western themes are held as models. Hence, decoloniality paradigm is against the concept of 'the coloniality of power' but calls on universities to fight for cognitive justice, equality and recognition.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) asserts that decoloniality as the colonial matrix of came as a result of the unequal nature of the world that is still maintained by epistemologies and pedagogies that continue to divide Africa and generate separate groups of Africans who are made to hate the Africa that give them a sense of belonging but like Europe and America that discards them. He posits that 'indigenous and endogenous' knowledges have been relegated to the margins of world while Africa is loaded with inappropriate knowledge that make them and their communities less powerful. They are made to believe that the knowledge they have from home before coming to school is nothing but folklore knowledges full of barbaric principles that should be disremembered. They are also told that their local languages spoken portray them as primitive set of beings. Judging from the above, one can say that these assertions foster the need for curriculum change. The call for decolonisation of curricula at universities was a fight against discrimination, against the rejection of South African world views. It is all about refuting some universal principles ascribed to the west. However it is also about acknowledging that which is embedded in Africa or South Africa and making great use of it.

Decoloniality is born from the realisation that Africa's world views and world order are continuously being distorted not only by the fact that western powers have conditioned them, but also the fact that western epistemologies and pedagogies are being held or maintained as supreme. These doctrines are detrimental to South Africans as they feel indifferent to their own cultures and or worldviews and at times prefer those of the western powers. For example Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013:11) laments of how there are no African universities but universities in Africa which continue to uphold western theories. This is evident through the continuous use of western epistemologies at universities. Students and activists of decolonisation of curricula are critical of the dominant use of western epistemological doctrines, histories and languages and

call for the recognition of African philosophies, knowledge, beliefs and languages(Heleta, 2016).

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013:10) expatiates that decoloniality as the colonality of power is the struggle to ‘rehumanise’ the world, to breach the gap and destroy the hierarchical differences that demean humanity and destroys the community at large. It advocates the creation of practices; knowledge systems and theories that respect indigenous history and cultures. That is to say, it condemns the recent curriculum imbalance in the production of knowledge but calls for knowledge that is situated within the African context (Said, 2014:2). With this said, South African academia should be united in the fight for reassertion of their lost identity. They should fight to emancipate and redeem concept that seeks to disconnect from intellectual generalisations of phenomena.

2.3 COLONIALITY OF KNOWLEDGE

This has to do with epistemological issues, politics of knowledge generation, that is, who generates which knowledge, and for what purpose. African studies are often reluctant to carry out research on epistemicides (the killing of knowledge systems) (Hall & Tandon, 2017), on how knowledge is used to promote imperialism and on how knowledge remains Eurocentric (view of knowledge from western perspective) (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013:11). In explaining this concept, one will say that colonality of knowledge questions the discourses that inform knowledge creation, that is, how knowledge came about and who produced it and the purpose for which it was produced. This is because for centuries now local knowledge systems have often been relegated to the periphery. This means that people in the non-western world are considered as people with no history or philosophies; rather, they are burdened with knowledges that do not empower them or their communities. Heleta (2016) concurs that the various students’ #MUSTFALL movements came as challenges to the dominant use of western epistemological doctrines in higher education curricula. It was a call for the rejection of western precepts imposed on South Africans. The attention of university management was drawn to redefine the academia, literature and knowledge. Students demand the incorporation of South African and by extension, African worldviews and the use of African languages as medium of instruction.

However, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) warns against Africans being entrapped at the end to universalise and standardise colonial principles as acceptable norms in the society. He calls on Africans to expose, challenge and eliminate these doctrines because they create inequality in the society (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013:10).

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013:11) further expounds that decoloniality is a “political-cum-epistemological” liberating mission that has to do with resisting, uncovering and destroying colonialist discourses. It advocates the creation of practices and theories that contradict coloniality. Western epistemologies are always declared as unquestionable truths that cannot be challenged. Ngugi (1993) affirmed that decolonial paradigm sets out to condemn dominant use of western epistemology and the neglect of African models of knowledge production. The #RHODEMUSTFALL movement that escalated in 2015 with students destroying the statue of Cecil Rhodes was just a demonstration of their frustration of having to deal with far-fetched concepts that do not reflect their identity.

Decoloniality as the coloniality of knowledge according to Mignolo (2009) is the call for the confrontation of the western epistemologies and to delink from the notion of geo- and body-politics of knowledge that serve only the interest of the westerners. He calls on Africans to challenge the westerners who have claimed inventiveness as the only standard way of judging the world (Mignolo, 2009:39). Better still, decoloniality is argued as a form of “epistemic disobedience”, “epistemic de-linking” and “epistemic reconstruction” by these theorists (Mignolo 2007: 450, Quijano 2007: 176, Mignolo 2011: 122-123).

Decoloniality gives room for former colonial people to challenge western deceit and dishonesty and to reclaim their lost identity. It also exposes western falsehood (universality, validity, scientificity) and the myth of claiming that they are the authors of knowledge, leaving Africans to fight for cognitive justice (Ndlovu-2013). These claims stand as hindrances to decolonisation of curricula as South African knowledge system and world views are not yet incorporated in university curricula (Grosfoguel, 2007). On the other hand, it calls for the recognition of African world views and philosophy that reflects the lived experiences of students. Stakeholders, policy makers and curriculum designers are called upon to design curricula that reflect African cultures and identities (Mamdani 1998:74; Pillay 2015). Hence, curricula should be designed to improve human condition, and not just to provide knowledge for job market. That is, universities

curricula should promote national development, develop human character and promote personal autonomy.

2.4 COLONIALITY OF BEING

The third concept is that of coloniality of being. It is derived from Rene Descartes 'Cogito ergo sum' (I think, therefore, I am). The issue here is how whiteness gained popularity over blackness. The colour 'black' is associated with evil, negativity while 'whiteness' is associated with positivity. Coloniality of being is very important because it helps to examine why Africans are subjected upon and commodified. Africans try to fight against objectification. These concepts give an insight of the creation of the present modern world that is plagued with a plethora of crises (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013: 12). One can say that coloniality of being births racism, discrimination and favouritism. Decoloniality therefore calls for the fight against racial discrimination as a problem, as well as, rejecting the notion that knowledge including science, was used to justify colonialism. In the eyes of decoloniality, Jansen (1998:109) asserts that the exclusion of black academics or inadequate academics in South African university curriculum is a hindrance to the decolonisation process. Consequently students are not trained with discourses that liberate them from dominant forms of oppression rather; their cognitive processes (such as thinking, language, processing information, and solving problems) of learning are drilled towards assimilating western principles (Peggy & Timothy, 2013).

Maldonado-Torres is another decolonial writer who, just like other decolonial writers, thinks that decoloniality entails the pulling away and or waging of war against the world order of coloniality (Maldonado-Torres, 2008). He refers to the colonised as "damnes" and urges them to question the norms of the western culture that have imposed and effected major changes on Africa's customs and traditions. He further explained the notion of the 'decolonial epistemic turn' as a process whereby the colonised becomes the thinker, theorist, writer, questioner and a communicator. Torres also believes that decolonial turn is a process where the damne arises as the inventor of knowledge. He thinks the colonised must shift away from the conventional way of giving meanings to objects, the way of identifying, visualising, feeling, of sexes and other colonial conceptions of the body (Maldonado-Torres 2011). With this in mind, the academia is called upon to be innovative, creative and bold enough to defend discoveries so as to challenge western concepts. This aspect emerges as one of the main concern for the call of decolonisation

of university curricula. This is exemplified on how students demand curricula that will make them creative.

Mignolo looks at decoloniality from what is called the 'decolonial option' which examines the pain inflicted on Africans and the fact that they are considered as underdeveloped intellectually, economically and socially (Mignolo, 2007). He further illustrates that, the introduction of the geo-historical and bio-graphical patterns or processes of knowing and understanding allows for Africans to radically debunk and restructure those claims. While Africans, can refer to those concepts or use them as guides, they should not to accept them as ideals. Africans can also use these concepts alongside the local world views to serve local needs and aspirations. One can say that, decoloniality strives to disprove the notion held by the western world about the geography of reason stemming from the west. It refutes the idea that the westerners are the founders of knowledge where the world is described, theorised and ranked thereby producing a standard world order (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). The prevailing of such claims therefore leaves students with no option than to fight for intellectual uprightness.

Besides, in an artistic environment, decoloniality sees the colonised (South African) as a personified individual who not only thinks but who forms, moulds, and reshapes prejudices, time and space. It encourages the damnes to become agents of social change. In addition, Maldonado-Torres (2016:31) avers that decoloniality is seen as a communal project. This means that South Africans should be united for community development; they should come together to fight against hatred, exploitation, segregation and domination. In doing so, the people should form an educational milieu that is bounded by love for the achievement of a common goal. Decoloniality should be a practical and theoretical rebellion; it should be about the liberation of the mind that is not bounded by colour, race, sex and class. Student movements nowadays call for an end to insincerity and for rigorous knowledge that will mould the students and build a more befitting society at large. Hence, they demand for social epistemic justice and want universities to be instruments that facilitate innovative works

2.5 CONCLUSION

In summation, gathering from the afore-mentioned views, one will say that the call for the decolonisation of the university curricula is not eclectic. Several scholars have highlighted the dangers inherent in the continued use of Eurocentric frames in the teaching of students in the global South Africa. Hence, it can be argued that decoloniality is all about rejecting, refuting, challenging western discourses as the legitimate ways of knowing. It is all about epistemic delinking, and rejecting the notion that the western people are the authors of knowledge. It is about rejecting the position given to Africa. It is about rejecting the names labelled on them- less developed, irrational and second class citizen. On the other hand, it is about epistemic reconstruction. It is about giving meaning to African images, reasserting their lost identities. It is about telling their own history and celebrating great men. It is about embracing African cultures, embracing African languages, and rebuilding the harm done on the African minds. It is about seeking for new ways and trying to find answers to phenomena. It is also about provoking Africans to be rational, creative and courageous. In order to achieve these, they should devise ways to revise university curricula where the knowledge inculcated on students centres on Africa's world view. Students should be given knowledge needed for socio-political transformation of their society, knowledge that will liberate students from the shackles of colonialism. All these can still be achieved if the academia could rethink, reframe and reconstruct universities curricula, without which, the decolonisation of university curricula is far from being realistic.



CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTIONS OF DECOLONISATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

An explanation and analyses of the theoretical framework was presented in the previous chapter. The tenets of decolonial theory were examined critically. They in turn will be used throughout the study to analyse the challenges of decolonisation. Chapter 3 explores the concept of decolonisation by firstly looking at its origin, examining the various definitions related to the topic and then discussing the processes of decolonisation. It was developed by writers like Kenyan author and activist Ngugi wa Thiong'o, and later modified and developed by Ghanaian philosopher Kwasi Wiredu (Wa Thiong'o, 1986 & Wiredu, 2007). Le Grange (2016) on his part explains how decolonisation started in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries as revolts to western empires often through forceful removal of imperial states from African territories. To him, decolonisation is the undoing of intellectual colonisation, which is, undoing the havoc done to the minds of students through brainwash.

Guruba (2005) avers that prior to independence Africans had lost their sense of belonging, identity, culture, and language and knowledge system. Africa was partitioned among western powers during the Berlin conference that gave the western powers the right to govern and exercise power over each African colony. Colonialism brought dismal and untold hardship to Africans. Ngũgĩ (1986: 16) further explains in his seminar text *"Decolonising the Mind"*, that colonisation was not just a political, economic or military domination but suppression and control of the minds of the colonised people, that resulted in cultural confusion, economic damage, political suppression and geopolitical division. Africa's socio-cultural and political set-up were destabilised; Africans were assimilated and taught to think and speak like the

westerners and forced to do things against their will (Bheki, Mngomezulua & Sakhile Hadebeb, 2018:67).

In this light, universities in South Africa therefore became the mechanism through which the colonisers perpetrated and implemented their plans. These institutions became practicing grounds where black students were indoctrinated and were persuaded not only to despise their cultural heritage but also to accept western epistemology and doctrines without questioning (Wiredu, 2007). South African's educational system and thinking capacity were hidden in favour of western educational policies and knowledge systems. Their philosophy, history and literature were written by foreigners using a foreign conceptual framework (Wiredu 2007). Odora-Hoppers and Richards (2011: 7) state that colonialism conquered the environment and bodies of the indigenes as well as their minds through education in subjects like economics, law and science. Hence, looking through the lens of decoloniality, decolonisation is a wakeup call for Africans and South Africans in particular to value and make use of the resources they have that will benefit their community.

Vorster and Quinn (2017:1) claim that the content of university curricula came from the west while very little was said about Africa and South African intellectuals. The methods of teaching and lectures delivery were unfamiliar to students, hence making the teaching learning transaction difficult for students to comprehend (Vorster and Quinn 2017:1). Mngomezulu & Hadebe (2018) add that, the curricula taught at universities in South Africa were largely Eurocentric while South African worldviews were relegated to the background. Students' prior knowledge about South Africa was completely erased in the guise of European's burden or duty to bring modernity and civilisation to South Africans (Said, 2014: 39). One can deduce from a decoloniality gaze that the call for decolonisation was therefore necessary to refute such claims. It can also be argued that prior to colonisation; South Africa had a wealth of knowledge system, philosophy and history. This heritage was only distorted by the westerners as they imposed theirs on South Africans.

Labelle & Dietrich (2017) uphold that the call for decolonisation of university curricula was then precipitated by university students and some progressive academics during the FeesMustFall, RhodesMustFall and Decolonise UCT Laws protests. Such movements and demonstrations by students across the country depicted their disappointment and dissatisfaction

with issues of domination and marginalisation of black students and staff. Hence, such movements were central to the discussion on decolonisation and served as attempts to destabilise whiteness at university and at the same time, called on Africans to question, reimagine and re-examine the role of the university in a post-colonial era. In the same vein, Wa Thiong'o (1986) and Wiredu, (2007) emphasised the need for education in South Africa to be restructured through decolonising the minds of students. One can say that educationists should therefore decentre western imposed concepts so as to reclaim their lost traditional thoughts and praxis. They should be able to use their own languages for easy transmission of knowledge and to articulate and theorise their own concepts

However, in disproving this claim, Sium, Desai & Ritskes (2012: 3) argue that decolonisation is a contested term marked by diversity and variety. This is because they think that former colonies had different world views, knowledge system and different experiences during imperialism that resulted in multiplicity and diversities of cultures. Thus, decolonisation to them is a mirage because of the different epistemologies, principles and natures. It will be difficult to reimagine, rearticulate and re-evaluate power, change, and knowledge through a multiplicity of epistemologies, diversities and principles (Vorster and Quinn .2017:6). This is to say that, the diverse nature of South African landscape with different local languages and different cultures remain a great hindrance to the decolonisation process.

3.2 DEFINING DECOLONISATION

The afore-mentioned arguments have illustrated the need for decolonisation of university curricula in contemporary times. The concept of decolonisation has been defined by many in several ways. To begin with, Césaire (2000:89) upholds that decolonisation is about regaining consciousness about one's identity and denouncing those worldviews, standards, principles and customs that have been imposed by western imperialists on Africans. Hooks (2010) added to this by defining decolonisation as the mutual or separate battles against the mental impairment inflicted on the indigenes by the colonial masters. Looking from a decoloniality perspective, it is quite evident from these definitions that decolonisation entails the removal of western imposed

precepts as university curricula. This will go a long way to shift the negative ideas that have been constructed in the mind of students.

Biraimah (2016: 51) argues that decolonisation is not only about the ultimate search to revive South African knowledge system, but a rejection of the impartiality caused by western powers in Africa or among South African intellectuals. It challenges issues of lack of access and also confronts imperial supremacy over the issue of knowledge production. More so, Pramod (2010: 4) thinks that decolonisation as a postcolonial discourse is used to describe resistance against race, class, gender (sexism) and oppression. It seeks freedom from colonial forms of thinking and it strives to revive local forms of knowledge by questioning and supremacy of European epistemologies. It is a call to break away from European worldviews, languages and knowledge systems that have dominated much of what university students learn today. Eze (2015) supports this claim and defines it as a process of detaching the African world of all colonial obligations, undoing imperial domination in all its manifestations, but upholding what is genuinely African. These definitions are apt and in line with decolonial paradigm as decoloniality speaks of equality, including all knowledges as curricula and giving equal opportunities to all races and gender.

Kenyan author Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986) avers that decolonisation of knowledge is not only about selecting the choice of material to teach at universities but also critically examining how things are taught and academics' attitudes towards using the material. To him therefore, decolonisation is about selecting educational material that suits African context, the method of teaching, and the attitudes of universities' intellectuals in conveying the message. For Fanon (2015) decolonisation means "struggles for self-ownership; struggles to repossess, to take back, if necessary by force that, which is ours unconditionally and, as such, belongs to us. It is about restructuring or transforming people once more to the craft men and women that they used to be. It is about the rejection, elimination, of the gap between the colonised and the colonisers. At the same time it is about the restoration of African values so that, those which will exist, will exist in it and not exist in a different thing".

Decolonisation therefore becomes the process through which the negative effects of colonialism are opposed, with the purpose of producing an environment where self-containment and autonomy are possible (Kamanzi, 2016). Heleta (2016) abides to this and asserts that

decolonisation has to do with restructuring and relabelling university curricula such that South Africa and African knowledge systems are at the centre of research, teaching and learning. He emphasised the need for Africa to tell its own histories at its own universities. He further explained that decolonisation has to do with rebuilding Africa's history, defining African culture and civilisation from an African view point. Drawing from the afore definitions, it is therefore logical to say that decolonisation has to do with the rejection of western precepts and the call to acknowledge and impact South African knowledge systems on students. Students should be encouraged to be constructive and rational in developing paradigms that will empower them as entrepreneurs.

For the purpose of this study, decolonisation will mean removing colonial elements from the curricula and replacing them with South African elements. What I mean here is, to examine the content, teaching methods, assessment procedures to see if they are in line with South African knowledges and discourses. It is also about redirecting western structures and destroying inequality planted in the education milieu in South Africa (Vorster & Quinn, 2017:3). Main courses and subjects taught at universities were analysed from western point of view and major thematic concerns were analysed from western perspective only. This is because European domination exposed students to western history and politics but not their indigenous histories (Vorster & Quinn, 2017:3).



3.3 HISTORY OF DECOLONISATION IN SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION

Having defined decolonisation in the above paragraphs, one will explore the processes of decolonising university curricula in South Africa. Decolonisation as a process of reclaiming and restructuring Africa's lost values (civilisation, culture and history) started after world war two as many African countries sort for political independence from the western powers. Weridu (2007) explained that the right of each African country to handle its affairs as a sovereign state was not easy to achieve, and some countries actually fought political wars so as to liberate themselves from their imperial masters. The student protest of 2015 in South Africa reawakened in the general public the need to re-orientate, restructure, redevelop and re-evaluate university

curricula. As such a number of measures have been set in place to incorporate South African knowledge system and languages as major thematic preoccupations and as means of communication in university classrooms respectively. Thus, in the subsequent paragraphs one will explain the processes of decolonisation.

To begin with, Zizek (2014) holds that the students protest of 2015 in what was known as the RhodesMustFall movement originated because of students' inability to liberate themselves or get rid of the legacies of the past. They therefore resorted to violence by toppling monuments and statues of western elites especially that of Cecil Rhodes in a bid to express their discontent of western supremacy in universities (Booyesen, 2016:3). Judging from this claim, Godsell, Lepere, Mafoko & Nase (2016:117) state that the students' protest demonstrated the hopelessness of black and middle class students to ever compete with their white counterpart in the face of a market driven society, a society where the poor have no place since they cannot afford the price for a good education. Hence, the student protest at the University of Cape Town was therefore a powerful catalyst calling for national reawakening of Africa's world views.

Fanon (2001) presents decolonisation in the *'Wretched of the Earth'* in a statement 'the first shall be the last and the last shall be the first'. This is suggestive of the reordering of the society in general and the university in particular. It is indicative of the fact that those institutions and organisations that privileged a certain group of people should interchange in favour of the formerly less privileged ones. Fanon avers that decolonisation must be fought for and achieved through violence. Decolonisation in South Africa therefore took various forms – advocacy, activism, disruption, dissent and protest. These various means were to demand for university curricula that represent South African identity.

The then Minister of Higher Education Blade Nzimande in his speech at the Higher Education Summits of October 2015, called for the decolonisation of university curricula. He encouraged and emphasised the need for higher education to be rid of colonial as well as apartheid practices. This statement was responded with actions taken especially by university of Cape Town to create a central Curriculum Board to discuss the issues of decolonisation (Wessels, 2017). Mr Blade Nzimande however reiterated the fact that building African universities does not necessarily mean disconnecting them from the rest of the globe but engaging with them in knowledge production and acquisition. He advised that these universities should not just be consumers of

knowledge but should rather be producers of knowledge that is beneficial internally, internationally and continentally (Wessels, 2017). This drive reflects decoloniality principle where there is a push towards generating what is typical of South Africa.

Badat (2010:2) argues that there has been a wide display of transformation-oriented dynamics in post-1994 trying to influence institutional change. These include: defining the purposes and goals of higher education; extensive policy formation, policy adaptation and implementation in the domain of academic structure and programmes, quality assurance, governance and funding. Significant policy mechanisms have been established including legislation, White Papers, Green Papers and Higher education Act. These policies were to challenge the issues of racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination; to provide optimum opportunities for learning and to foster knowledge creation. There was the creation of the National Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) that allocates funds for students' fees, donation and other services.

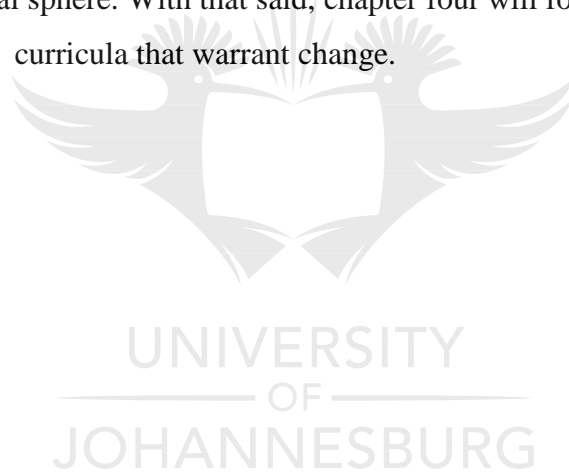
There was also the formation of the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) in 1995-1996 to regulate and restructure university curricula. It aimed at directing and acquiring great skills in education that will eventually lead to social, cultural and economic development of the society (Ensor, 2004). Thus, it was meant to create curricula that will be important and expose students to different types of jobs both internally and internationally. Still, it also wanted to create curricula that will make universities responsive to the needs of the local population. It was created to enhance an organised universities system, promote students' entrance to university and make sure funds are allocated. It was also responsible for good governance; contribute to significant knowledge and strike a balance between equity, efficiency and equality (Soudien, 2010). It was created by the government of South Africa to design curricula to meet with the global trend of credit exchange on the basis of global changes in the production and distribution of knowledge (NCHE, 1996).

Higher Education South Africa (HESA) (2014:2) points out that, Post -1994 significant achievements have been realised. University education system has advanced such that African students who were denied access to certain programs in the education system have now been greatly included in it. Black student enrolment has doubled; there is more justifiable access and more student representative body. According to the Council for Higher Education (CHE) (2015) the percentage of female that were restricted to the system has increased tremendously. These

processes are attempts to revise university curricula, though decolonisation is not yet fully attained.

3.4 CONCLUSION

In sum, the above points have elaborated on the origin of decolonisation, the definitions of decolonisation and the processes of decolonisation. These explanations will further help in understanding the course of this study. There is a call to decolonise university curricula from western epistemic tradition to Afrocentrism. However, as Blade Nzimande highlighted, decolonisation is not going back to the Stone Age or completely wiping out western discourses. It should be a process of amalgamating both views in university curricula so as to situate universities within a global sphere. With that said, chapter four will focus on what curricula is all about and what constitute curricula that warrant change.



CHAPTER 4

THE NATURE OF UNIVERSITY CURRICULA IN SOUTH AFRICA

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the conception of decolonisation where different definitions were analysed. It argued that decolonisation should be a process of discussing South African worldviews as the focal point while using western precepts too where necessary. It also examined the processes of decolonisation of university curricula. Chapter 4 is the examination of university curricula and relating it to the study as a whole. It should be borne in mind that South African university curricula, twenty five years after the country gained its political sovereignty from the colonial master and the apartheid system of government has not considerably changed (Heleta, 2016). There is the prevalence of western epistemology as the dominant source on which curricula is drawn and the use of foreign language as the medium of instruction. There have been several attempts by the South African government, stakeholders, and policy makers to amend curricula to suit the African context but we still find such practices in the educational sector. Structurally, in the subsequent paragraphs, one will look at the concept of curricula, probe into university curricula that precipitated change, and then examine the agencies that are responsible for designing university curricula.

4.2 CURRICULUM: SOME DEFINITIONS

The conception of curricula has been interpreted by a number of key writers in diverse ways. To start with, Pinar (2008) thinks that curriculum can be described as what, why, and how best students would study in an organised and purposeful way. Reid (2012) adds to this by looking at curricula in terms of how educational precepts are transmitted to students, the outcome and the impact of their learning to their community. In the same vein, Phenix (1962) & Pinar (2012) define curricula as an official progress in education that underscore and heightens what is to be

studied (content) and the specific thematic concern for the purpose of emancipating students. One could infer from the above definitions that curriculum has to do with the reason, the content and methods of transmitting knowledge to students for the purpose of producing citizens who can greatly impact their communities with the knowledge they acquire.

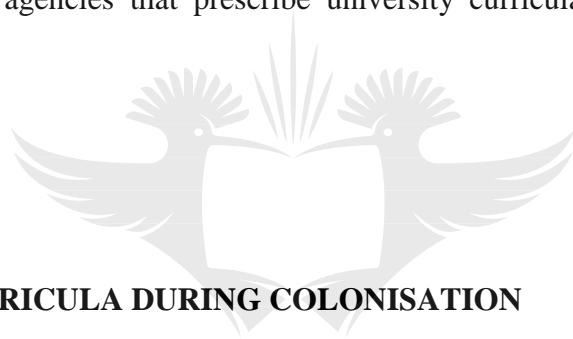
According to Obanya (2004), curriculum can be seen as all that is supposed to be taught in universities. This means that the objectives of the nation concerning what is to be studied are being adapted into that which can be done within the university milieu. Le Grange (2004) on his part thinks that curriculum is that which incorporates policies, plan, and strategies at the tertiary level of education. Curriculum in fact, is a well arranged course outline designed with the aims of facilitating teaching and learning. In a broader sense, it is a way of grooming students to become industrious citizens and serviceable members of the environment to which they belong. Thus, curriculum is seen as a tool of education that intends to educate and improve human conditions (Maduewesi, 2007).

In explaining John Dewey's curriculum theory, Berding (1997: 24) emphasised the need for curriculum to produce students who can cope with the modern world. He states that curriculum must involve the student's preconceptions and must include how the student perceives his environment. Curriculum should therefore create an organised sense of the society where the student lives. The choice of using many definitions is because these definitions fit in line with the explanation and understanding of the concept of curricula. In this study therefore, the working defining of curricula will mean, the content to be taught, the language to be used including the methodology of teaching and assessment, and the relationship between the student and teacher (altitude).

However, despite several years of independence, university curricula in South Africa still reflect colonialist epistemologies (Maile, 2011). Universities in Africa continue to suffer from the hegemonies (language, knowledge, history, philosophy) of colonialism and apartheid even after these ills have been condemned by the democratic government in 1994 and there was a call for equality, equity and social justice in the educational sector. Heleta (2016) asserts that even after 1994, the curricula of most universities in South Africa remain largely Eurocentric (imposition of western perception onto other people's awareness; an invasive dogma that attempts to wipe out the varied histories to substitute them with perspective that are shaped and formed by those

who want to pacify them) and continue to strengthen Western supremacies and at the same time is full of conventional, preconceived and patronising interpretations about Africa and its people. The contents of what students learn (western prerogative canons and languages) are of little significance to the African students and their environment.

Consequently, this disparity led to resistance by black students and pressures from internal and international structures that criticise such practices and help to eradicate apartheid and Eurocentric practices. Curriculum therefore becomes a necessary element for the transformation of the society and as such measures should be taken to design curricula that relate to students' environment. Hence, the ensuing paragraphs introduce one and present an in-depth analysis of the nature or characteristics of university curricula during the colonial and apartheid era. One will further look at the agencies that prescribe university curricula and the impact of their decisions.



4.3 UNIVERSITY CURRICULA DURING COLONISATION

University education and or curricula during the colonial system of government was characterised by a series of social, economic and political inequalities of a class, race, and gender, institutional, spatial nature and unequal distribution of educational resources in favour of the white race (Reddy, 2000). There was the introduction of the University Education Act in 1959 that forbade universities from admitting black students. Even though the number of universities increased in the 1960s, universities curricula were designed to prepare blacks for unskilled labour. Black universities had second grade textbooks, inefficient lecturers and poor facilities (Nkomo, 1990). The black race was provided education needed to instil in students the need to be docile and make them believe that their inferiority was natural and education was needed just to promote their cultural heritage and identity. When the apartheid government eventually took over power in 1948, university milieu was used as a vehicle to promote, spread and reinforce their beliefs through laws and acts. In 1953, there was the introduction of the

Bantu Education Act, 47 to parliament by Dr Hendrik Verwoerd- the then Minister of Native Affairs, later Prime minister. The Bantu Education Act, No 47 of 1953, instituted a black Education Department in the Department of Native Affairs that designed university curricula to suit the requirements of the blacks (Reddy, 2000).

In 1959, this law was later on extended to non-white universities such that the government degraded the international prominent university of Fort Hare as part of the Bantu Education (Ajayi, 1996). Tension erupted in Soweto- a town in Johannesburg-on June 16, 1976 over the Bantu law and Afrikaans- the language of the white, to be used as the medium of communication and instruction in universities. The result was the Soweto uprising or massacre in 1976 that led to the death of 575 people (Council on Higher Education, 2004).

Blacks were trained to become administrators, and to function as a class of labourers trained for unskilled work for the industries (Badat, 2001). In essence, the curricula designed during this period was just to train blacks to assist other labourers and at the same time did not allow them hold prominent positions in the society or take major decisions that could help amend their conditions. Besides, there was unequal distribution of educator within the Bantustan Education Department (Nkomo, 1990). These educators were trained without taken into cognisance the need of the society, hence; there was a great imbalance in the production and distribution of educators between races. Only 1/3 of black teachers were qualified leading to a great shortage of teachers by the early 1990. As if that was not enough, things became worse in 1959 when the government decreed the extension education Act, No 45. According to this Act, black students were prohibited from attending white universities specifically the universities of Witwatersrand and Cape Town. The result was a revolt thereby retarding the growth of education in South Africa (Badat, 2001). Besides, there was inequality at the level of funding. State budget spent on blacks, coloured and Indians was just 1/10 of that spent on whites (Wolpe, 1991). Financial assistance was not allocated for the blacks in the 1970s. All financial aids were removed on black universities by the government thereby forcing mission schools to either sell their universities to the government or shut it down completely. Salaries of black lecturers were not encouraging leading to a reduction of the number of lecturers.

In addition, Van Wyk & Higgs (2011: 177) further explain that curricula should stem from the socio-cultural and academic setting from which the student is based so as to further abstain from the marginalisation of the less privileged group of people in the society. The transformation of educational concepts should necessitate a theoretical framework that respects South Africa's diversity, recognises lived experiences and contests the supremacy of Western forms of universal knowledge (Higgs, 2012). Mbembe (2016:32) recommends that syllabuses that are designed to meet the need and aspiration of the colonial masters should be redesigned to bring an epistemological change in university in South Africa. University system therefore requires a vital repair of the whole epistemological model underlying the current educational system (Msila, 2017). Judging from the points raised above by these writers, it is important that universities in South Africa come to a consensus and design university curricula that counter western preconceived ideologies about Africa. University curricula should be able to reflect the learners' environment and empower them with knowledge needed to combat societal challenges.

4.4 AGENCIES RESPONSIBLE FOR UNIVERSITY CURRICULA

Generally, university is often considered as the backbone of the nation since it trains and produces citizens who are expected to transform the society through the knowledge and skills (curriculum) they acquire. Curricula therefore become very vital as the output of students depends on what they obtained from the curricula, hence, it should be given much attention. For curriculum to be effective therefore, it must undergo numerous processes, so as to evaluate, develop a program, improve the designed program, implement it and to re-evaluate the program (Ayub & Smith, 2015). Curriculum planning and development should be viewed as a process by which meeting students' needs leads to improvement of student learning. Regardless of any theory or model followed, curriculum developers should gather as much information as possible so that students' lived experiences should be mirrored in the university programmes, pedagogy and course content (Jonker, 2005). The preceding paragraphs examines firstly the role of

university in a nation in designing curricula, and then looks at other agencies that decide what is to be studied at universities.

4.4.1 THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITY IN DESIGNING CURRICULUM.

To begin with, university has as role to respond to the demands and needs of the population. It is expected to emancipate students to take responsibilities as active members in a society that practices democracy. University therefore should be able to train skilled labourers, add to the building of the society, contribute to develop research infrastructures and to engage in community development projects (Divala, 2017).

Besides, the university is supposed to train good citizens who can engage in greater problems solving in the society and to be responsive to the need and aspirations of the citizens, provide equal opportunities, social justice and promote democracy (Ensor, 2004). It is expected to transform the society by addressing the problems of inequalities, inefficiencies, the fluctuating knowledge and skills needed to upgrade innovation and productivity. There is the need for university to shift away from the practices of racial discrimination and suppression which were seen during apartheid. Hence, curriculum should therefore help a society to attain its educational goals.

Nussbaum (2001) recommends that education should encourage national development by training students with skills and knowledge needed to improve the economy. Young (2006) on his part asserts that the acquisition of knowledge is the key feature that distinguishes education at any level from all other activities. He also seeks to reiterate the issue of knowledge as integral to curriculum theory (cognitivism), in contrast to such issues as assessment, evaluation, and guidance to most programmes. He argues that a number of trends in educational theory have contributed to the marginalisation of knowledge in curriculum studies. He maintains that only those in power are given the opportunity to select knowledge for the curriculum and as a result, social interests are always involved in curriculum design.

On the other hand, the National Government of South Africa has taken great measures to make sure that university programmes help to meet societal and economic needs (Ensor, 2004). A number of stringent and strategic measures and policies have been put in place to rationalise university curricula. This has to be achieved through transforming university curricula from the apartheid racially segregated education to a democratic education system that stands for social justice, equity and equality. In South Africa, university curricula are decided not only by the government but by a number of agencies, parastatals, with a purpose of fulfilling their desired objectives and achieving their desired goals. In the subsequent paragraphs, one will therefore look at those involved in designing university curricula and the impact it has on the student

First and foremost, after the 1994 elections, there was a need by the national government to transform higher education curricula. In doing this, the government created national bodies and trade unions, coupled with stakeholders, policy makers, and curriculum developers to design university curricula that suit the South African landscape. Besides, Jansen (2004: 33) avers that the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) suggested that policy makers should design university curricula that underpin democratic principles like equity, redress, non-racism and non-sexism. There was also the creation of curriculum 2005 (C2005 – Department of Education, 1997) all in a bid to reform university curricula and provide students with the best education that will empower them for community development

Moreover, significant policy mechanisms were established including legislation, White Papers and Green Papers. Badat (2010:2) explains that post-1994; there have been a number of transformative initiatives that set out to effect academic transformation. There has been the need to define the aims and objectives of higher education, policy formation, approval, extensive policy research, policy implementation, academic structures and funding. For instance, in 1997, there was the release of the white paper aimed to transform higher education through the provision of programme-based higher education system, provide funding.

The White Paper: The white paper also sets out strategies to improve the quality of education and training, ways to ensure that lecturers in both private and public sectors produce graduates with an experience in the labour market (Badat, 1995). The white paper on university education transformation of 1997 advocated for equity of access, cultural tolerance, non-sexist, nonracist social order, educational programmes should instil creative thinking and contribute to advance

knowledge in all ramifications and encourage scholarship to student (The Universities South Africa, 2015)

The Green Paper: The Green Paper aimed at providing a vision for post-university education and training system, combatting mechanical challenges plaguing the society by providing access to education and training prospects, achieving high level of excellence and innovation (Department of Education Green Paper on Higher Education, 1996b) .

The Higher Education Act (1997) has general aims to respond to human and developmental needs, reconstruct higher education structures, and promote the awarding of scholarship to students. Significantly, it strives to address past discrimination, to enhance knowledge, ensure equal access, great opportunities for learning, funds allocated will be transparent and fair.

Furthermore, there was the creation of the National Curriculum Statement which gave more prominence to content, knowledge, expertise and active participation, communication, cultural diversity human rights, multilingualism and the encouraged the learner centred approach of learning. It also encouraged teachers to be role models (Department of Education, 2002:7).

Curriculum was to incorporate teaching, learning and training but at the same time there was disagreement between theory and practice, knowledge delivery and academic, and knowledge and skills (Department of Education, 1997). Thus, the government engaged in curriculum design for the purpose of educating its citizens and preparing them for all-round services both in his community and the world at large (Department of Education, 2007). These policies were to help revamp the havoc caused on the educational sector during the apartheid era.

Moreover, just as democratic practices were encouraged in university education, so too were globalisation and neoliberal policies welcomed by the state. Globalisation and neoliberalism are giant theories of the 21st century with policies that have caused great impact on curricula. With their policies, university curricula are designed not only to prepare students to serve their immediate surrounding but the world at large. According to Ensor (2004) curricula are designed towards credit exchange and internationalisation of education. The National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE) stipulates that it was necessary to shift curricula towards credit exchange in the face of globalisation and the knowledge society.

Gyamera & Burke (2018) argue that neoliberalism has taken the dominant position in universities policies and practices with the aim of internalising universities. The neoliberal policy was also observed in different curriculum change which had as its goal to generate income, attract students and be internationally recognised (Arthur 2006). Gyamera & Burke (2018: 451) further contend that the government also emphasised the need for neoliberal policies so as to increase employment rate for students. Despite the fact that neoliberal policies and practices were introduced in university to give importance of curricula, there has been a contrary judgement by the general public. Popular opinion holds that there is a lack of knowledge and skills needed for economic and socio-cultural development of the society. It is also argued that there is insufficient funding and also inadequate teaching and learning amenities (Gyamera & Burke (2018).

More so, Mwaniki (2012) avers that, neoliberal policies stand as impediments towards efforts at decolonising university curricula. Neoliberal influences undermine the use of African languages for communication, ignore the use of local education knowledge systems and discourage the production of university curricula from indigenous knowledge. These practices favour a particular group of people while limiting access to others

The insistence of market from the supremacy of neoliberalism has led to the questioning of university curricula in relation to the idea of international leadership. This is because of the need for South African university curricula to meet universal standards and to compete in the global market and form alliance with businesses and firms. Knowledge and the ability to know are often geared toward the market for international competition and academic ranking of universities. Hence, profit making is the motif behind most institutions as they instead train students for the global market and not to emancipate them for community development (Nixon, 2013).

As if all has been said, the world's super power dictates what is to be studied at universities. Most African countries from the 1980s have been infiltrated by the world super powers especially the World Bank and International Monetary Fund who dictate what is to be done in most African countries. Most national governments have lost their political and social supremacies and academic management to decide the fate of their institutions. These super powers provide funds to higher learning institutions and also determine the salaries of workers. In like manner, university curricula are also determined by world banks and other super powers

(Mngomezulu & Hadebe, 2018). Hence, university curricula do not reflect the social realities of the students but they are forced to study, to their detriment, what is imposed on them. Looking from a critical perspective, it suffices to say that the call for decolonisation was necessary so as to reclaim and maintain South Africa's rich heritage.

Further, Meier (2018) upholds that university curricula in South Africa are also determined by stakeholders (teachers, parents, students). The role of stakeholders (teachers) is to assist students get involve and improve their relationship with the content. Teachers' involvement in curriculum development gives room for teachers to be resourceful, that is; their planned lessons comprise experimentations, models, drills and other activities for effective teaching-learning transactions. Students' active participation in the lesson will upsurge their concentration and they will be able to retain what they have studied.

One can also say that it is quite imperative for teachers to be part and parcel of curriculum development process because teachers stand out as experts that better understand the needs of the students. The teacher is aware of the different learning styles of the student and he stands a better chance to make sure the purpose (content delivery) for education is achieved. Hence teachers' role is inevitable and should not be undermined in the development of university curricula. However, Fulufhelo (2012) argues that in South Africa, teachers have been relegated to the background and are seen as passive receivers and implementers of curriculum that have been externally developed. He calls on the need for teachers to be partners in making policy decisions and not only act as mediators.

4.5 CONCLUSION

In sum, this chapter has been all about providing a conceptual definition of university curricula, one also looked at university curricula during colonial and apartheid periods, policies that guided the transformation of university curricula and the agencies responsible for designing curricula were also examined. From the afore-mentioned analyses, one would say that curriculum is that which is taught at university, the methodology and the purpose for which it is taught. It is of utmost importance that university curricula reflect African world views, system of beliefs, philosophies and knowledge that should be geared towards empowering Africans. These knowledges will help them to reassert their lost identities and will assist them get involved in the

affairs of their community. The curricula should be transmitted in a language they understand and also help them develop skills for community development. This chapter leads us to the next chapter where one will be looking at the reasons for decolonising university curricula.



CHAPTER 5

WHY DECOLONISATION OF UNIVERSITY CURRICULA IN SOUTH AFRICA?

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter presented a conceptual definition of university curricula, analysed university curricula during colonial and apartheid periods, analysed policies that guided the transformation of university curricula and the agencies responsible for designing curricula were also examined. The present chapter is an exploration of the reasons for decolonisation of university curricula. The subjection of the African race by the Western World brought untold and dismal consequences to the African people especially to their mind-set and educational system. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013), during the colonial age, Africans were reduced to a people without an identity, knowledge system, culture, history and language. They were regarded as people who could not think and write for themselves. Consequently, this led to the distortion of the socio-cultural structure of Africa and the imposition of colonial or imperial epistemology, language, history and culture on Africans. These discrepancies led to agitations by African scholars and students who have thence questioned the superiority of imperial epistemology and languages even at universities. This gave the impetus for the call for an African renaissance, a rebirth of that lost identity and the use of their languages as a medium of instruction. Students demanded that their histories be told, about great men and great discoveries. They want their own concepts and or key paradigms to be taught at universities. In this light, the call for university curricula reached its peak in 2015, in South Africa to be specific.

A campaign was therefore staged in 2015 and 2016, during the #RhodesMustFall movement (Odora-Hoppers, 2017). South African students and academics called on policy makers, educators, stakeholders, curriculum designers and planners, professionals, and experts to decolonise university curricula from western centred epistemological doctrines and to incorporate South African epistemologies (Msila, 2017). They demanded for an end to the

domination of Western discourses, traditions, histories and symbols but call for university curricula that will be beneficial to the students and to their community at large. This chapter therefore presents a critical analysis of the factors that necessitated the call for the decolonisation of university curricula which are examined below.

5.2 THE EFFECTS OF WESTERN PHILOSOPHIES AND LANGUAGES

Contrary to the opinions above, Shay (2016) from a critical standpoint, argues that, it will be problematic for universities to completely decolonise the curriculum. To this scholar African (South) students should be educated and trained and be prepared to serve the world at large and not just Africa in particular. For example, he contends that if students are trained and prepared to serve only in Africa (especially in the medical field), then they will have limited knowledge about world's problems and may not be able to exchange ideas, contribute to global crisis, to solve global health challenges or compete with their counterparts worldwide. In like manner, Makoni (2017:5) maintains that decolonising the 'intellectual property -curricula especially in law will place African students in a disadvantageous position since they will not meet up with their counterparts in the law department worldwide. It can therefore be said that limiting university curricula only to South African knowledges will indeed hinder graduates from law and medical fields to deal with certain global challenges.

Moreover, Said (2014) asserts that the aftermaths of colonialism still persist till date in South Africa in the form of corruption, discrimination, racism, domination and exploitation that has pervaded the indigenes. Le Grange (2016) upholds that decolonisation signifies a call for equal access and quality education; it is about challenging the complexities of class struggles in a post-colonial era. It is about eliminating racism, sexism, patriarchy, heterosexual and neoliberal capitalist standards which have dominated the academic environment. These discrepancies have great effects on black students, especially because, only 15% of black students who go through the first year in university eventually graduate from university.

In the same vein, Chiumbu (2017) argues that the call for decolonisation is a struggle against western norms and principles. He termed the struggle, the 'decolonial turn', that is, a struggle to rid university off western and apartheid principles and practices. It is a call to induct students into particular forms of making meaning of what they have studied rather than providing them with curricula that make them receivers of knowledge. That is to say that, the students should be seen as agents of their learning but not just as inactive beneficiaries.

Mampane, Margaret & Aluko (2018) posit that the student unrest of 2015 which led to the call for the decolonisation of curricula was caused by inconsistencies in the number of graduates and the skills needed in the labour market, high rates of school dropouts, insufficient funding, high level of unemployment and the use of a foreign language as a medium of instruction. Added to this claim, Postman and Weingartner (2007) assert that students were not taught what was worth knowing and what was taught contradicted his environment, hence, making it difficult for him to serve in his community. Judging from a decoloniality perspective, one would say that it is necessary to decolonise curricula because the continuous use of foreign discourses will lead to lack of skills needed for local employment. This will eventually lead of high unemployment and poverty rates.

In a similar vein, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) claims that, the call for decolonisation is the call to replace Eurocentric canons with African history and literature. It is also a call to use locally important examples and applications of knowledge in the sciences in particular. It may also mean to re-orientate various disciplines to address local problems and conditions. It speaks of the need to develop programmes using indigenous knowledges that address the needs of students and for them to be able to combat challenges that come their way (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). Mbembe (2016) augments that the call for decolonisation of university curricula is a struggle to decipher what is to be taught and the conditions under which curricula should be taught to South African students. He thinks that students should be taught ways of producing knowledge and not depends on western knowledge production. Hence, there is that urge to design curricula that centre on South African precepts and that will in turn prepare students for a greater workforce in subsequent years.

In addition, Letsekha (2013) claims that another contributing factor that precipitated the call for decolonisation of university curricula was the fact that African intellectuals were continually

being enslaved in their teachings as they were preoccupied with dominant western epistemologies and methods of teaching. Most universities still privilege colonial ways of learning even though there were several attempts by the constitutions, policies and other unions to revamp university curricula and contextualise academic structures. However, Adésínà,(2006: 144) contends that university curriculum suitable for a post-apartheid university is that which gives room to different ontological views and interpretations but not just to dwell so much on erasing western principles from the university curricula.

Freire (1970) in his book titled *'Pedagogy of the Oppressed'* calls on South Africans to decolonise university curricula and make South Africans the subject of indigenous education and research rather than the object. To him, indigenous knowledge should gain prominence and be at the centre of discussion at university as well as indigenise concepts to suit South African context. In the same vein, Mamdani (2016) avers that the call for decolonisation is a call to revise South Africa's educational research and practice and a call for the recognition of key paradigms used in South African universities (Gumede, 2017). It insists that all critical and transformative educationalists in Africa should acknowledge indigenous African world views and develop their nation's educational paradigms in indigenous South African socio-cultural context (Gumede, 2017). He also claims that indigenous South African knowledge systems can be used as initial resource for the socio-educational transformation of the African continent.

Still to add, Nakata, Keech, & Bolt (2012) argue that epistemological concerns are arguably discriminating rather than being applauded or appreciated when local knowledge systems are represented as opposite of colonial epistemology on the basis of the fact that they are meant to serve local current needs, practices and welfares. According to Mignolo (2012), the western world prefers indigenous practices to theoretical analysis because they think that Africans cannot function as 'theoretically minded people'. Theoretical questions are sometimes ignored in local studies because they think that 'intellectualism is as a result of cognitive imperialism' (Deloria, 2004).one can arguably say that this statement is faulty because cognitivism has to do with mental acquisition of knowledge (Peggy & Timothy, 2013:51). That is to say, students acquire knowledge through mental activities where information is collected, arranged, saved, and reclaimed by the mind. Students have the capacity to process information given to them since

they are rational beings. Hence, their minds are open to learn new things about South Africa, its people and culture.

Furthermore, Alvares (2012: 373) postulates that the call for decolonisation of university curricula is caused by the fact the neoliberalism in present times has made universities more of commercial and industrial entities rather than educational institutions of learning (Alvares 2012: 373). He argues that universities are seen as commercial organisations and the purpose of education- creation of knowledge to develop skill needed for community development - is relegated to the background. Vocationalism becomes the order of the day as success and the quality of education are replaced by increase in grade points (Allaha, 2009). As such, graduates become more confused and empty when they leave university than when they first went in. This therefore led to the outburst of decolonisation of university curricular.

Moreover, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) argues that epistemicide placed African at a continuous state of no progress or in a state of always wanting to become. The humanity of the African people is questioned thereby qualifying them as inferior beings. The subjection of the African race because of their colour has reduced them to a set of people who cannot think for themselves, people without a history, development, writing, ethics, civilisation and souls (Ndlovu- 2013: 197). This gave rise to decolonisation of the African mind. Mbembe (2016: 194) on his part makes us understand that epistemicide had affected the minds of Africans such that they are meant to think and act in specific directions. It affected their manner of thinking, of knowing, their way of producing knowledge, affected the angle at which they view and interpret concepts, the way they interpret symbols, images and their mode of expression. The western powers had made their own ways of knowing and producing knowledge the only legal and authentic ways at which the world can be understood (Mbembe, 2016).The academia therefore sought ways to get rid of these dehumanising forms of learning at universities. Mbembe, (2013) speaks of the need to re-Africanise in order to decolonise. To him, decolonisation strives to overcome the fragments of eurocentrism that is detrimental to the African minds, identity and culture. These scholars are therefore of the opinion that decolonisation is a call to uphold African values, to rewrite, teach and define African History from an African perspective. African history or precepts taught should empower students

Guattari (2001) in contrast avers that it is imperative to decolonise South African universities and by connotation the university curricula, for the reasons advanced above. However, decolonisation is not an event but a process and it is not necessarily easy to achieve. He claims that we cannot go back ancient times, we cannot turn back the hands of time or simply start from scratch. Guattari (2001) contends that we cannot create new ways of living by reversing technological advancement and going back to old method which were pertinent when the planet was less densely populated and when social relations were much stronger than they are today. New ways of living are to be found in responding to events as potential carriers of new possibilities (Pindar & Sutton, 2001: 9).

Said (2014) argues that the imperialists have forced a language on the indigenes meanwhile local languages, cultures, values and histories have been ignored or misrepresented. Singh (2012: 121) advocates the need to introduce indigenous languages in university curricula. He thinks that English language has dominated the university milieu thereby reducing exploration and production of research in local languages in Africa. Gupte (2012: 127) added that local languages should be placed side by side with English language, so as to fortify and express practical realities. He also proposes that translation can be devised as a means of making social sciences a global reality.

In like manner, Author and African intellectual Wa Thiong'o's (1986) claims that, western languages continue to dominate Africa and form a consistent means of communication as sustained by post-colonial administrations, irrespective of the fact that the local population speak native languages. This scholar advocates linguistic decolonisation, that is, he urges Africans to embrace their mother tongue as an act of self-awareness and empowerment. He suggests that Africa needs to set up departments of languages that are well funded so as to contribute to language practice and policies. Over the years students have demanded to be taught in their local languages for easy transmission and comprehension of the subject matter to no avail. Universities still pride over western languages thereby retarding the decolonisation process (Heleta, 2016).

According to Alatas (2012), decolonisation of university curricula implies introducing an all-inclusive interdisciplinary learning so as to prevent a deformation of knowledge. A combination of these disciplines will stand tall against the western prejudice on South Africans. It will also

give a chance for Africans to question western supremacy thereby boasting the morale of local thinkers or scholars. To achieve this, the curriculum designers and planners should redefine the roles of the lecturer and instructional materials. Texts books should be designed such that the weight of the material falls more on learning experiences outside the classroom. Educators should act as guide to students and direct them on how to learn rather than giving them what to learn, how to link different subjects and be given a chance to present the knowledge they have studied (Alvares (2012). Hence, the cry for decolonisation of university curricula is a cry to recognise South African key theorists, researchers and to give credibility to the works both at local and international levels. It is also a call to recognise the voice of students in the teaching - learning process. However, decolonisation does not necessary mean the destruction of western knowledge; rather it should be a process of decentering it.

The call for decolonisation of university curricula is the struggle to emancipate colonised people and reinstate their indigenous worldviews. Mignolo (2009: 174) calls for epistemic disobedience as a way to cut off from imperial epistemological suppositions and stand on a neutral position of interpreting and knowing the world. He thinks that, in order for epistemic disobedience to be effective, one need to look at the 'geo-and bio-politics of knowledge, which completely condemns the notion of universal knowledge stemming from the west, which hitherto demeans the indigenes. Besides, to Higgs (2011), western knowledge systems have dominated and established ways of evaluating research in Africa. As such, African educational values-theories and practices -have been marginalised in favour of western educational values. However, Scholars and educators have failed to recognise local practices and preferences but have imposed western canons on them. Such practices have continued to uphold western cultural belief thereby preventing the development of African cultural epistemology .This is as a result of the fact that much of South African history is dominated by imperial concepts since it presented a framework for the organised suppression of educational, scientific, economic and cultural life of the local population, hence, it led to the loss of South African identity. Africans are assimilated and have become a 'mirror' of imperial identity. This therefore gave birth to the quest to reassert their lost South African identity, to look for ways of thinking that will still connect them to the world.

5.3 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the afore-mentioned concerns have underscored the reasons for the call of decolonisation of curricula. It is therefore quite imperative to decolonise university curricula so as to give prominence to South Africa's history, philosophy and languages. In the ensuing chapter, the challenges of decolonising university curricula will be critically examined.



CHAPTER 6

CHALLENGES OF DECOLONISING UNIVERSITY CURRICULA

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter discussed issues of race, language, the continuous use of Eurocentric canons as the central reason for the call of decolonisation of university curricula. Chapter 6 critically examines why university curricula have not change since the outcry to review university curricula. The clarion call for decolonisation of university curricula that gained prominence when students and some progressive scholars demanded for the recognition and incorporation of African world views, knowledge system and languages in university curricula ,is yet to be realised. University curricula still mirror the footprints of their former imperial masters. University curricula still maintained colonial legacies- knowledge system, world views, languages, policies and praxis. As to why university curricula have not considerably changed is a cause for concern. Hence, this chapter focuses mainly on the pitfalls to the complete attainment of decolonisation of university curricula in South Africa. The ensuing paragraphs present a critical analysis of the hindrances that range from the incessant use of western epistemology, languages, the effect of neoliberalism, the effect of globalisation, the existence of many languages, complexities in the approach of decolonisation by African leaders (neo-colonialists).

6.2 WESTERN EPISTEMOLOGY

Firstly, the continuous use of western epistemology as university curricula is a great hindrance to the decolonisation process. Heleta (2016) thinks that South Africa national administration that manages the affairs of some universities is responsible for the delay or failure of decolonisation of curricula since the general outcry. These agents continue to uphold and impose certain conventional, epistemological and conceptual traditions as the ultimate. University curricula is entangled with universities practices that largely centre on Eurocentric ideas or propaganda

which demeans and marginalises South Africa's authors and their works. To him, the majority of academics in South Africa hold onto western knowledge and are hesitant to renounce western claims through undoing of knowledge classifications (Heleta, 2016). Hence, the educational milieu remains unfavourable for curriculum change.

Heleta further elucidates the difficulties South African scholars face at university since they are a minority and their academic writings are being underrated. African (south) worldviews are not included in university curricula because it is claimed that Africa has no intelligentsia that is beneficial to students. He added that university curricula cannot be decolonised instantaneously because universities still maintain dominant western epistemic norms. In like manner, Vegas (2017) is of the opinion that decolonisation of university curricula remains quite challenging because of the renewal, adaptation and democratisation of former knowledge systems, world views to match with contemporary realities. That is to say that, universities continue to maintain pedagogies from the west meanwhile South African realities are overlooked.

Furthermore, Lebakeng, Teboho, Phalane, Manthiba & Dalindjebo (2006) opine that university institutional cultures continue to privilege western symbols, rituals and behaviours imposed on African students. This is a great impediment to transformation of the curricula even though the new constitution provides space for constructing a discourse that talk on local relevance and articulates silent voices.

Nzimande (2015) avers that the call for decolonisation of university curricula has been long overdue. To him, the Report of the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions in 2008 highlights how universities have not done much since the dawn of a new democratic era of 1994, to develop other forms of knowledge and knowledge creation in an innovative and empirical way. Heleta (2016) concurs as he by explains how university curricula are dominated by western epistemology, epistemic violence and worldviews which are intended to exploit, destroy, overpower and brainwash university students. These western epistemologies have always been declared as unquestionable truths that cannot be toppled. Hence, the reason why university curricula still maintains western forms of knowledge. Ngugi (1993) from a decoloniality standpoint condemns wholly the dominant use of western epistemology and the neglect of African models of knowledge production. He advocates for the creation and inclusion of African

forms of knowledge in university curricular. One can deduce from these arguments that university curricula need to be rid of those world views that continue to marginalise South African knowledge system.

Better still, Talton (2011) argues that African leaders after independence gained social and political powers under European control. Some of these elites worked with Europeans to protect their interests, to maintain economic and political resources, and cultural supremacy. The legacies of western supremacy are seen in, educational systems, national languages, trade networks and political structures. These policies tend to suppress and relegate South African worldviews and knowledges to the periphery. Mbeki (2017) in a similar argument postulates that the issues of power and academic politics are great impediments to the decolonisation process. To him, power struggle at university over who to decide what knowledge comprises of, what knowledge to be circulated, who constitute the makers of knowledge, who designs and pass across knowledge, hinders curriculum change. Hence, he thinks that 'academic politics' is demeaning because the perils are so high, and curriculum planners may likely receive orders from the powers that be and will subsequently produce 'invalid knowledge' that does not represent the aspiration and needs of South African citizens. From a critical perspective, the struggle for power at university as to who to rule stands as a hindrance to decolonisation of curricular as the powers that be will impose their decisions which might not necessary be the best for students.

Kenyan author, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o quoted by Blade Nzimande (2015) avers that decolonisation of knowledge (curricula) goes beyond reform in the choice of material (content). It also looks at the attitude of the instructor or administrator towards the curricula and his attitude to new ways of thinking. Wa Thiongo'o thinks that universities in South Africa are far from achieving their desired goal because of discrimination, segregation and nepotism in the university milieu. According to Wa Thiong'o, scholars must be ready to 'unlearn', 'learn' and 'decolonise' their minds for a complete transformation of university curricula. However, he is sceptical that these academics might not be willing for a change because of their strategic positions and benefits.

Another aspect Nzimande (2015) cited in relation to attitude is the issue of justice, equal rights or preferences (racism). He thinks that racism is another impediment to decolonisation of knowledge (attitude- the manner in which knowledge is transmitted to students). This is because

black students and scholars, according to him, are discriminated and deprived of certain academic rights and amenities. He further explains that, racism births discrimination and makes life unbearable for both students and lecturers. He argues that in most university environments, cultures of exclusion and intolerance are visible in the forms of disrespect, inequality and favouritism. These practices at universities go a long way to reinforce or re-enact the legacies of the western powers. This is because the whites consider themselves superior to the blacks. Because the blacks feel marginalised, the resultant effect becomes poor academic performances on the part of black students. Hence the blacks are no match to their white counterparts. This definitely will lead low academic performance, high drop out and subsequently high unemployment rate. Hence, decolonisation will entail decolonising the minds of the perpetrators of injustice, to work in synergy to build a just and conducive academic environment for all students.

Moreover, Nzimande (2015) also quoted the speech of the former vice chancellor of the University of Free State, Prof Jonathan Jansen, who in 1998, indicates firmly that, what students study at universities as content matters a lot. He is of the opinion that university content is full of western centred curricula that continue to dictate and prescribe what they think is sensible knowledge suitable for students. Besides, Thesnaar (2017) concurs and opines that the struggle against western supremacy in South Africa has failed to lead to socio-political equality, to an extent, democracy and individual freedom. He therefore concludes that decolonisation is a vague term and the struggle to decolonise university curricula is left at the mercy of the administrators who at times dictate what is to be learned at universities.

Luckett (2016: 424) contends that university curricula are predominantly dominated by some views like capitalist, heterosexual and male chauvinism. That is to say that, it undermines and underrates the experiences, epistemologies and viewpoints that do not fall under these conventional categories. In yet another instance, he claims that cultural and structural concerns that inhibit the complete decolonisation of university curricula include deficiency in recognising black students' cultures, identities and histories; uneven access to language proficiency; and the uneven nature of the society. These constraints serve as limitations to the decolonisation process.

Better still, Dladla (2017) on his part upholds that there is a need to decolonise university curricula because Western philosophy has continuously been involved in the creation of the

theoretical structure of racism, domination, inequality and racist thinking as well. To him, there are quite a good number of texts that precisely promote racism and discrimination of the “great Western tradition” with great exposures about the bodies of work of thinkers like Kant, Hume, Marx, Hegel, Voltaire and Montesquieu. Western curricula are intended to direct teaching and learning and therefore are prescriptive and uncompromising which do not often meet the needs and aspirations of particular groups of learners.

In addition, Mamdani (2016) asserts that colonialism did not only impose theories on Africans but they claim that they are the inventors of theories; hence academics outside the West are compelled to use these theories as major precepts in university curricula. In the same vein, Heleta (2016) holds that most South African academics solely depend on western explanations of South Africa meanwhile the knowledge from South Africa is disregarded. More to this, Mbembe (2016:32) from a decoloniality gaze highly reproves the fact that syllabuses in the post-colonial era are still designed to meet the needs of colonialism. To him therefore, African socio-cultural and philosophical principles will remain subdued by western thoughts unless these issues are redressed.

Another challenge cited by Ahmed (1992) is the stale, exploitative, and imperial connection that exists between the post-colonial academic and his environment. He claims that everything this scholar does is geared towards promoting and maintaining western theoretical standards. Dei (2000, 113) purports that, western principles and associations continue to shape universities practices. These theoretical canons are detached and farfetched from indigenous realities such that their reformist goals have little or no use of actually healing the wounds inflicted on them by colonialism. Mgqwashu (2016) from a decoloniality perspective avers that decolonising university curricula will preclude universities in Africa to become extensions of previous imperial powers as works from the western countries will be substituted with works of African academics and writers.

Besides, the world is becoming a global village, and with the use of information communication technology for learning, it will appear impossible to completely do away with western philosophies. South African universities among other universities around the globe, are becoming transformed in a uniform way and what characterises these universities are issues of

credit accumulation and the transfer of issues of interdisciplinarity of programs that inspired South African universities to interact with other universities all over the world (Divala J. 2017).

6.3 LANGUAGE AS IMPEDIMENT TO DECOLONISATION

The prevalence of western language as the medium of instruction and the many languages spoken in South Africa pose a great challenge to decolonise university curricula. Mampane & Margaret (2018) claim that language is very important in the production of knowledge as it is used to transmit knowledge, identify a culture, present western traditional worldviews, and epistemic traditions. In the same light, language policies are directed towards encouraging sociolinguistic values. Hence, they consider language and culture as interwoven, such that language policies are geared towards promoting the sociolinguistic culture of a people, when linked together. However, imposing western language on a group of people is like imposing their culture on them (Higgs, 2012 & Olatunji, 2010). One can say that the continuous use of western language as the official language of instruction at university is derogatory. Students are obliged to present and defend their works in English language irrespective of the different South African languages spoken.

Likewise, Wa Thiong'o's (1986) asserts that western languages continue to dominate Africa and form a consistent means of communication as sustained by post-colonial administrations, irrespective of the fact that the local population speaks native languages. He therefore urges Africans to embrace their mother tongue as an act of self-awareness and empowerment. He suggests that Africa needs to set up departments of languages that are well funded so as to contribute to language practice and policies. Aijaz (1992) in the same light, argues that the language of instruction is foreign both in the literary and articulated sense. Colonial language adopted and used to explain phenomena by post-colonial intellectuals have reformist awareness. He therefore from a decoloniality perspective, calls on Africans to produce a culture that counters those of the westerners, write their own history that differs from that which they have been told and form their own images (Said, 2014: 39). Over the years students have demanded to be taught in their local languages for easy transmission and comprehension of the subject

matter to no avail. Universities still pride over western languages thereby retarding the decolonisation process (Heleta, 2016).

As if all has been said, the socio-cultural environment of South Africa is diverse and made up of several languages. According to Masilela (2009) South African cultural history is made up of diverse languages with each having its unique feature. He argues that languages with historical formation pose a serious problem to the academic milieu. The existence of these languages makes it difficult to choose and unify a particular language as a medium of instruction and communication. He further explains that alongside linguistic hitches, is the issue of historical and cultural practice that render language as an intricate issue in South Africa university landscape. For instance, the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction at certain universities causes tension as non-speakers agitated and called for the inclusion of other native languages. He questions the superiority of Afrikaans over other local languages and concludes that the use of Afrikaans is an imperial invasion and marginalisation of their culture.

Masilela (2009) on a different note asserts that Africans are not quite ready for change. They advocate decolonisation of languages but at the same time they continue to write and publish their works in western languages. A case in point is Ngugi wa Thiongo, among others Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe, John Pepper Clark who has been writing his creative works- short stories, dramatic plays, novels and critical essays in English language in the late 1950 and early 1960s and only later started writing in his native language when he had confrontations with imperial white settlers. This is indicative of the fact that the call for decolonisation is a myth and it is far from being a reality. In sum, Masilela (2009) upholds that is imperative to introduce South African languages as medium of instruction albeit, he contemplates the criteria the academia will use in choosing the suitable language. He concludes that the process of doing this will be more complex and might lead to political strife.

6.4 NEOLIBERALISM AS A PITFALL TO DECOLONISATION

The rapid social, economic, cultural and political growths after World War II all over the world gave rise to the birth and development of new ideologies (globalisation and neoliberalism) which saw the need to harmonise the world in terms of sharing ideas, goods and services for the betterment of all. The birth of neoliberalism and globalisation was to promote and provide equal and fair educational opportunities to all irrespective of the class, race and gender. However, these precepts have negative impacts on the 21st South African society especially in educational policies and practice (Amory, 2012).

According to Amory (2012) the practice of neoliberal policies - commodification and the drive to make huge profit are impediment to decolonisation of university curricula. To throw light to this, in his article "Decolonising the University: New Directions", Mbembe (2016) argues that neoliberal policies are a great hindrance to the decolonisation process because higher education has been highly commercialised such that the pursuit of knowledge is for profit making. More so, Kandik (2010) in support of this view asserts that neoliberal policies in university are characterised by entrepreneurial and commercial influences. These policies trend as corporatisation, privatisation and commercialisation. Universities are therefore considered as entities where the creation and accumulation of knowledge is prone to financial purposes and it is influential to the attainment of specific economic services.

In addition, Ross (2006) argues that neoliberalism is not a new phenomenon but an attempt to limit the rights and powers of the underprivileged by a few contemporary bourgeoisies. The neoliberal strategy of marketisation has placed education under scrutiny. Curricula have been reformed by the government through legislation that commodifies education thereby reducing learning to knowledge and skills that are needed for the market. Education has been reduced to a commodity where programmes that are being taught and tested are sold out, hence, encouraging privatisation and the payment of fees instead of providing free public education. Education is geared towards encouraging students to do more of science and technology while those of humanities subjects are not encouraged (Chinnammai, 2005). Neoliberal educational reforms focus more on creating standards and implore accountability strategies where the state defines what knowledge to be taught. University curricula that are designed do not reflect students' lived experiences, and because there is that market driving force, administration will always want to maintain universal standards.

6.5 GLOBALISATION AS AN IMPEDIMENT TO DECOLONISATION

Khalaf, (2011: 493) states that globalisation influences educational policy making and praxis. Globalisation has turned education to an international commodity that invests in people, knowledge and skills. Educational policies, reforms and programs are designed to prepare local students to compete with international labour force. Educational policies are enacted to go by international standards because of the domination of the global economy above local policies and politics. New educational policies that are introduced in Pedagogy, curriculum and evaluation only serve to foster competition among nation states. Educational programmes, assessment, curriculum and creative pedagogical policies are implemented for global competitiveness while students' local needs are ignored. One can argue that in the face of globalisation, it will not be proper for South African academia to train students with knowledge that centres only on South Africa. This will limit students' knowledge about the world and prevent them from participating in global educational programmes. This suffices to say that global policies and practices are hindrances to decolonisation.

Still to add, George (1997) expounds that universities in South African face numerous challenges stemming from intricate alterations that are connected to globalisation. Universities are characterised by the drive of entrepreneurial and market- like motives that enhance institutional management. This is further noticed by changes in the creation, emphasis, method and distribution of knowledge including knowledge commodification for competition, marketisation and a move to temporary and practical research. Still, there are changes in research and development that are constantly sponsored by unconstitutional and individual personalities (George, 1997).

All in all, globalisation and neoliberalism have led to the worldwide spread of education and this has greatly affected South African academic structures. Academic institutions have responded to the growth of the capitalist society by becoming a profit making organisation where their goals are geared towards making money rather than providing knowledge to students that will empower them. This has led to privatisation of and competition among universities (Chinnammai, 2005). As a result there is disparity in education values leading to high level of

illiteracy among African citizens and brain drain. Education is meant for those who can afford and this has bridged the gap between the haves and the have-nots in the society (Lynch, 2006). University curricula focus more on cross-cultural content which prepares students for metropolitan services (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2009). Western ideologies are the main discourses in universities. South African cultures, histories and worldview are ignored and relegated to the background.

6.6 COMPLEXITIES AMONG AFRICAN SCHOLARS: NEO COLONIALISM

Ginio & Schler (2010) state categorically that the complexity existing among South African intellectuals in their different approaches to the decolonising process is another hindrance to the decolonisation process. While these scholars agree on decolonising university curricula, they differ in the strategies to be used to achieve their desired goals. For instance, Fanon on the one hand thinks that decolonisation can only be achieved by the use of violence, Ghandi on the other hand believes in resistance without the use of force. However, Ghandi's ways of achieving this are complex and entails persistence due to limitations. Ginio & Schler (2010) claim that the process of decolonisation put forward by these authors further complicates our understanding and have more intricacies, distrust and have engaged in unambiguous acts of omission and invalidation. This therefore justifies why university curricula have not changed from its time of inception.

Additionally, Fanon (2015) thinks that neo colonialism is a continuous exploitation of Africa from both internal and external forces. Neo-colonialists still depend socially and politically on former imperial leaders who continue to rekindle western precepts. He explains that in order for the former coloniser to maintain their rulership over their previous colonies, they had to pass through African politicians and middle class men with great influences. Ngugi (1981) argues that, the colonisers might have gone but they still influence how things are being done through African leaders who receive orders from them to exploit and maintain colonial discourses. Besides, the relationship between these elites and their former masters is sustained to the detriment of the masses who feel exploited, marginalised, suppressed and disempowered even

after independence. Hence, the masses are disappointed and discouraged in their leaders since they still have to maintain western languages and epistemology (Ginio & Schler, 2010).

Similarly, Louw (2017) argues that South African scholars have not so far proven their worth in establishing educational matters that could foster knowledge creation, improve the creation of wealth, reduce inequality and improve ways of accommodating the different languages spoken for the smooth transmission of knowledge. African academia are not confident about and do not believe in the potencies of African knowledge system. However, Africans in defending themselves claimed that there is insufficient material for the curriculum which necessitates transformation; hence the struggle to decolonise curricular proves futile (Heleta, 2016).

Talton (2011) states that decolonisation is supposed to bring development however; Odora-hoppers & Richard (2017:7) hold that South African are still going through what he calls 'second generation colonialism' which is colonisation of the intellect via education, disciplines, economic, science and law. Hwami (2016) opines that some of these neo-colonialists are mainly trained by the western education system. As such, they are disclosed as western impersonators incompetent enough to conceptually decolonise university curricula since they are overcome by the imperialist culture (Fanon, 2004: 84). This suffices to say that, because the elite population still practice Eurocentric principles, it will be impossible to completely transformed university curricular. This explain why university curricular has not changed

Poverty is another force that impedes decolonisation of university curricula. According to Ginio &Schler (2010) dependency theorists claim that most ex -colonies remained underdeveloped because they depend solely on foreign capital and markets for their livelihood, as such, they are not capable of accessing technology and wealth to grow national economies. Kenneth Kaunda quoted by Talton (2011), adds that Africa's short coming comes from their lack of finances and proficient workers. Hence, they still go back to the west or east to solicit for assistance. They fail completely to work for the benefit of the local population through valiant and advanced enlargement programmes. They still fall prey to European prejudices; hence, they continue to uphold western epistemology Drawing from the afore-mentioned points, one can say that South African university curricula has not changed in toto because of the incessant use of western epistemology, complexities in the approach to decolonisation, existence of many languages, the effect of neoliberalism and globalisation.

The universities have done very little since 1994 to open up diverse bodies and diverse knowledge different from western imposed knowledges. Though universities have had new policies and frameworks that speak about equality, equity, transformation and change, educational principles and epistemological traditions have not considerably changed. Policies might be there but the willingness to implement them is lacking (Department of Education 2008:41). South African university education system remains a colonial dependency up to this day, reproducing domineering identities instead of eradicating them (McKaiser 2016). Mbembe (2016:32) argues that something is not right when syllabus that represent colonial and apartheid hegemonies still persist in the independent or democratic age. This is why it is of paramount importance to bring about essential epistemological change at universities.

6.7 CONCLUSION

From the foregone opinions, one will say that the call for decolonisation is a complex process since it has not been implemented since 2015 that students kicked against European philosophies as dominant ideas in university's curriculum. It is true that South African students demand African philosophies, cultures and histories be added to university's curricula but, much of what comprises the curricula is still predominantly European. South African scholars do not believe in their own work and some he wonder whether African philosophy as a set of African knowledge can empower knowledge needed by Africans for their educational development. The researcher therefore concludes that hybridity education will resolve the problem of decolonisation since both African and European world views can be included in curriculum. This is because it will be practically impossible for students to go back to the precolonial way of learning since we now live an advanced world.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, a philosophical argument was explored on the challenges of decolonising university curricula. This chapter being the concluding chapter starts by presenting possible solutions to problems identified. It then gives a resume' of the study, recommendations and suggestion for further research. The call for decolonisation of university curricula gave a new impetus to South Africa academia to sort ways to resolve pertinent issues raised by student as regards the dominant use of western knowledge systems and languages. It was a wake-up call for freedom from the shackles of colonialism (Molefe, 2016). It was a call to conscientise, to reminiscence and to question the superiority of one race over the other that affect pedagogy. The various student movements thence raised awareness and instil in the government and educators the need to revise university curricula. As such, commissions, policies, trade unions and Acts – highlighted in chapters 3 & 4 have been created to devise means to include South African worldviews and languages as part of university curricula. Thus, this chapter presents possible ways or trajectories to ameliorate the current challenges to the decolonisation process. It should be recalled that the previous chapter (6) is the critical analysis of the dynamics that hinder decolonisation. This chapter sets the bases from which chapter seven will be founded.

7.2 POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS

To start with, Higgs (2012) think that universities should confronts western forms of universal knowledge. This is because the aftermath of colonialism (the domination of western epistemology) has great effects on Africa's educational thought and practice. He suggests that the transformation of universities curricula should take into consideration the philosophical framework that respects Africa's diversity, that recognises lived experiences, and that must confront western forms of universal knowledge. He asserts that African educators should be

aware of the role African philosophy can play in transforming African educational theory and practice. To him, African philosophy is endowed with diversity and it is geared toward pragmatic concerns and towards providing a better life for its citizens. For this reason, education in Africa must not only function as 'ideological handmaiden' that serves the interest and maintains relations of domination and power. This to say that if these principles are taken into consideration, then university curricula

In addition, Heleta (2016) unravels the causes of eurocentrism and epistemic violence at universities and argues that universities in South Africa should challenge and disassemble epistemic violence and they should utterly reconsider, reframe and restructure university curricula .Heleta (2016) further explains that all scholastic curricula in Africa must have Africa as their core, and must be indigenous-grounded and positioned. Universities in Africa should provide content and programmes that respond or relate to the African social context. Classrooms should provide spaces for students and teachers to examine their contexts, material conditions and experiences in the learning effort, so that they should together generate more contextually relevant research that resolves society's challenges. University should position South Africa, Southern Africa and Africa at the core of teaching- learning transaction and research.

Curricula should contribute to the transformation of educational theory, research and practice in Africa. African curricula or discourses should respect diversity, acknowledge lived experience and challenge the supremacy of Western Eurocentric forms of universal knowledge (Higgs, 2012). It should contribute to empowering knowledge that will enable communities in Africa to contribute in their own educational development. Students cannot be empowered if they are locked into ways of thinking that work to oppress them. They cannot also be encouraged if they do not have access to those indigenous forms of knowledge which provide them with their identity as persons.

Besides, the Minister of Higher Education – Blade Nzimande- a speech in the Higher Education summit of 2015 called on the indigenisation or Africanisation of university curricular (Le Grange, 2015). Le Grange also suggested that developing transdisciplinary knowledge could create numerous disciplines that will accommodate both western and African languages and knowledges. He avers that knowledges should not be prescribe or centre only on issues of universities but should include the common man and his environment.

Dei (2000, 113) suggests that western ideologies that embody western mode of production should be challenged. Odora- Hoppers (2011, 3) upholds that there should be drastic reconsideration of imperial subjects or courses. Le Grange (2015) urges curriculum planners, developers and designers to explore different ways of using local languages and local knowledges as models. He also emphasise the use of performative aspect of knowledge. This means that knowledge should be enacted when taught as opposed to the representational aspect of knowledge (Turnbull 1997; Le Grange 2007). A performative side of knowledge will go a long way to displace dominant systems of knowing when both local and foreign knowledges are acted side by side.

He suggests that students should be taught the origin of humankind, that is, the study of the origin of human being should be examined as drawn from Nabudere (2011, 159) Afrikology. Afrikology strives to emancipate Africans from oppressive and dehumanise practices brought to them by imperial forces through epistemologies. He thinks that Africa has a plethora of knowledge and it must be traced from the roots and made known of the potential loaded in Africa. This will allow African to reassert the knowledge during the precolonial days especially that which was invented in Greece but was later adopted and misrepresented by westerners. According to Le Grange (2015), decolonisation does not mean to annihilate imperial epistemology, rather it means placing the two worldviews side by side in order to meet with global standards. It also means to decentre western knowledge system and give more value to South African knowledges and languages

It should be borne in mind that the above authors are of the opinion that universities in Africa at large and South Africa in particular should decolonise university's curricula by challenging the hegemony of western domination of epistemology and the idea of universal knowledge. They call for the recognition of African philosophy and the implementation of these philosophical discourses in the university curricula. They emphasised the need for educators to appreciate Africa's diversity for a smooth transformation of educational theory and practice. Educational discourses and pragmatism in Africa are geared towards empowering students and providing a better life style for all Africans. Educational discourse in Africa must be liberated from western domination in order to empower learners. They think that people cannot be liberated when they still depend on western ways that are intended to oppress them nor they can they be empowered

if they do not have access to their indigenous forms of knowledge that provide them with their identity. Hence, they think that decolonisation is a prolonged battle that will not be achieved at a wink.

7.3 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, one can say that this study was an investigation on why university curricula have not changed since the numerous calls to decentre western discourses. This study argued that university curricula is yet to be transformed from western epistemologies to African worldviews due to some pitfalls like the incessant use of western hegemonic doctrines, the unwillingness of some African academics to relinquish power, the effect of academic politics, diverse nature of the South African landscape with different languages and cultures, to name a few. However, all hope is not lost as possible solutions to challenges were suggested. The study, through the decolonial paradigm, urges educators, stakeholders, the government or the academia as a whole to introduce hybridity university curricula where both South African worldviews and western worldviews are taught as curricula. This is because the human society and nature has greatly evolved, the world has advanced in technology and the world is a global village. It will be improper to cut off South Africa from the rest of the world. This study ended by suggesting possible areas for further research.

7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are some recommendations on resolving the challenges of decolonising university curricula:

- Stake holders, curriculum planners could design university curricula that centre on South Africa world views and knowledges.

- Multilingualism could be introduced to resolve the problem of using a ‘foreign language’ for research or medium of instructions. Students could actually be encouraged to carry out research in their mother tongues. This will actually give credence to South African languages
- Encourage African scholars to recognise the potentials South African philosophy could offer and be proud to use locally theoretical and empirical examples .
- Social justice, equality and equity should be practiced at universities so as to redress the issues of discrimination, racism, favouritism and sexism.

7.5 SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

One will suggest that an area for further research will firstly be to expand on this study if time and resources will permit. This study also indicated a lack in the understanding of the term, decolonisation and the processes to decolonise it. It will be of great significance if interested researchers will want to expand on this issue. One will also like to suggest that other studies can be carried out on find solutions to the problems of decolonisation. This is because decolonisation process is a contemporary phenomenon or struggle as the academia has witnessed students’ vandalism demanding a stop to the continuous use of western precepts. Hence, more solutions to these problems could be proposed so that university curricula could actually be decolonised.

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